(b) whether it is a fact that the Government of Andhra Pradesh has recently imposed huge rate of levy on marine products particularly shrimph caught in Vishakhapatnam for export;

(c) whether Government have taken up this issue with the Government of Andhra Pradesh, if so, details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) The Government has been requesting State Governments from time to time not to impose levies on products which are earmarked entirely for exports.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Yes, Sir. The Government of Andhra Pradesh has been requested not to levy purchase tax on marine products earmarked for exports.

(d) Does not arise.

Coordinated Strategy for Farm Exports

1281. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have noted recent criticism from various quarter that there is no coordinated strategy for farm exports;

(b) whether there is any proposal for better coordination among Commerce, Agriculture and Food Processing Ministries; and

(c) if not whether a separate division would be set up for farm exports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) and (b) The policy of Government on agricultural exports has already been placed on the Table of the House in the draft Agricultural Policy Resolution. While agricultural exports provide the farmer an expanded market, and therefore possibility of a higher price, the policy has also been framed in such a way to ensure the availability of items of mass consumption.

To ensure coordination among the Ministries of Commerce Agriculture and Food Processing, besides discussions at the official level, these Ministries are represented in various Commodity Boards like Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority, Tobacco Board, Spices Board etc.

(c) A separate division for export Promotion of agricultural products already exists in the Ministry of Commerce.

Protecting Indian Plant Varities in the Dunkel Draft

1282. PROF. SAURIN BHATTACHARYA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any provision has been made in the Dunkel Draft for patenting Indian Plant varieties;

(b) whether Government have issued orders for exporting various seeds and plants under the Dunkel Draft proposal; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Paragraph 3(b) of Article 27 of the draft agreement on TRIPs provides that "..... members shall provide for the protection of plant varieties either by patents or by an effective sui generis system or by any combination thereof .....". In respect of the option of 'effective sui generis' system no details have been spelt out nor is there any reference to any existing international instrument pertaining to plant variety protection, thus some flexibility has been left to each country to design its plant variety protection law to suit its national requirements. The Dunkel Draft does not impose any obligation to export seeds and plants.